



Canadian Wildlife Service Update on Wildlife Emergency Response, Seabird Surveys & Observer Training Program

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ECCC-CWS

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C-NLOPB Spill Prevention and Response Forum



Overview

CWS Roles & Responsibilities

Progress since last year's forum

- Wildlife Emergency Response
- NL Regional Assessment follow-up
 - Seabird Observer training
 - Seabird strandings & systematic searches

Conclusions



CWS Roles & Responsibilities

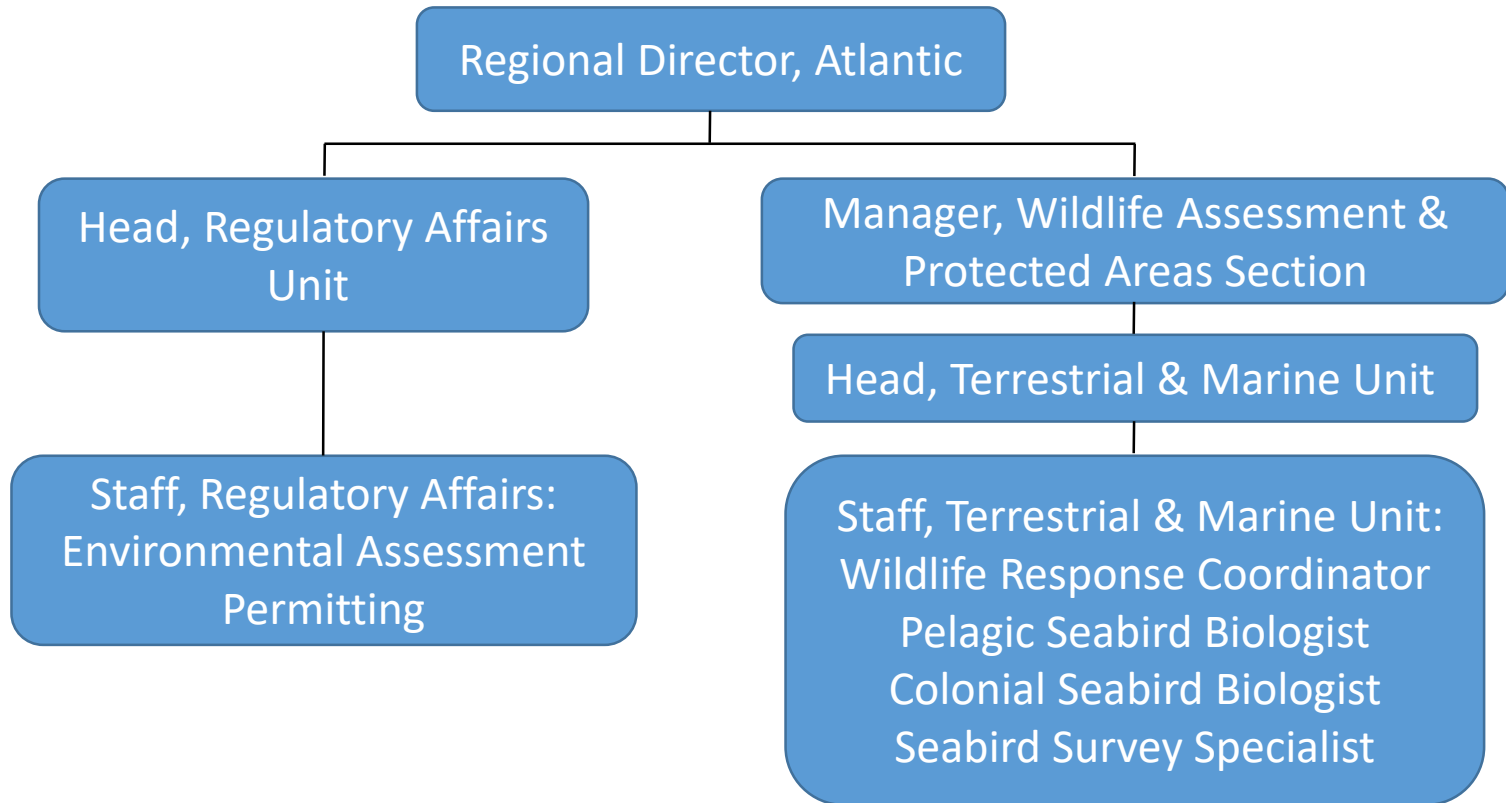
CWS is a branch of Environment and Climate Change Canada responsible for:

- Management and conservation of Wildlife:
 - Migratory Birds** wherever they occur in Canada (Mig. Bird Conv. Act)
 - Species at Risk** under ECCC's jurisdiction (Species at Risk Act)
 - Includes terrestrial species and migratory birds such as seabirds
 - Does not include fish, marine turtles or marine mammals
- Marine and terrestrial habitat protection for wildlife via:
 - Migratory Bird Sanctuaries** (Mig. Bird Convention Act)
 - National Wildlife Areas** (Canada Wildlife Act)

CWS works with Fisheries & Oceans Canada and Parks Canada Agency to ensure marine birds are reflected in their Protected Area planning



CWS-Atlantic staff who regularly work with C-NLOPB*



* Note: This slide does not include all staff, or other sections and units within CWS-Atlantic



Main risks to migratory birds from offshore oil & gas

- **Oil Pollution**
- **Light Pollution**
 - Attracts migratory birds and can cause strandings



CWS engagement with C-NLOPB

CWS works with the C-NLOPB to implement actions to reduce risks to migratory birds and species at risk

- Environmental Assessment review & expert advice
- Wildlife Emergency Response & Preparedness
- NL Offshore Regional Assessment follow-up program

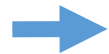
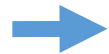
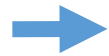


Wildlife Emergency Response: Lessons Learned & Progress

Presented at the 2019 Spill Prevention and Response Forum

CWS Lessons Learned

1. Communicate expectations prior to response
2. Provide guidance
3. Regular check-ins
4. Communications during a response



Progress

- Review of Wildlife Response Plans
- Discussion with C-NLOPB and operators
- National Wildlife Emergency Response Policy and Framework
 - Drafts shared with operators
 - Final coming in 2021
- Observer training & experience guidelines developed (March 2020)
- Spill forum, document reviews, meetings
- Through NEEC and C-NLOPB



Wildlife Emergency Response: Lessons Learned & Progress

Operators/ Response Org. Lessons Learned

1. Develop Wildlife Response Plans



2. Maintain a list of trained & experienced observers



3. Enhance capacity for data acquisition and transfer



Progress

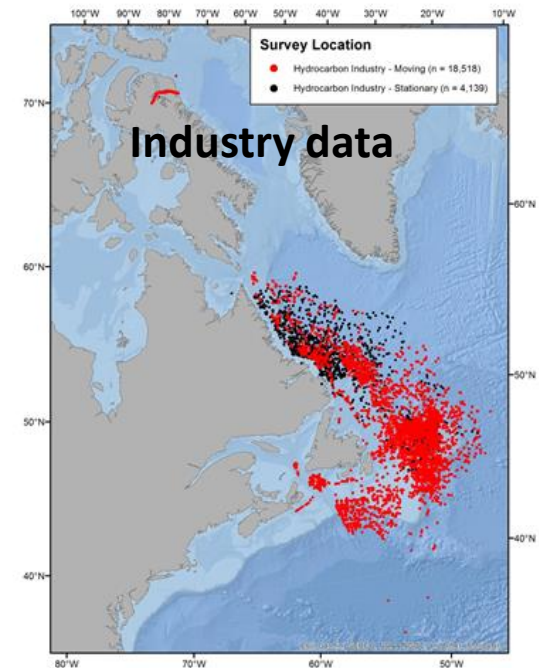
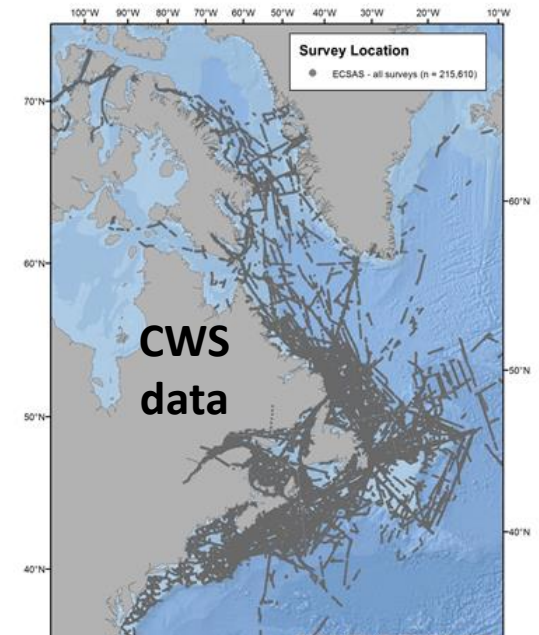
- 6 plans reviewed by CWS through C-NLOPB
- Strong foundation for effective and efficient response
- Preliminary list in place
- CWS position to work with operators on follow-up
- Not yet complete
- Best coordinated with observer training program



Seabird Surveys

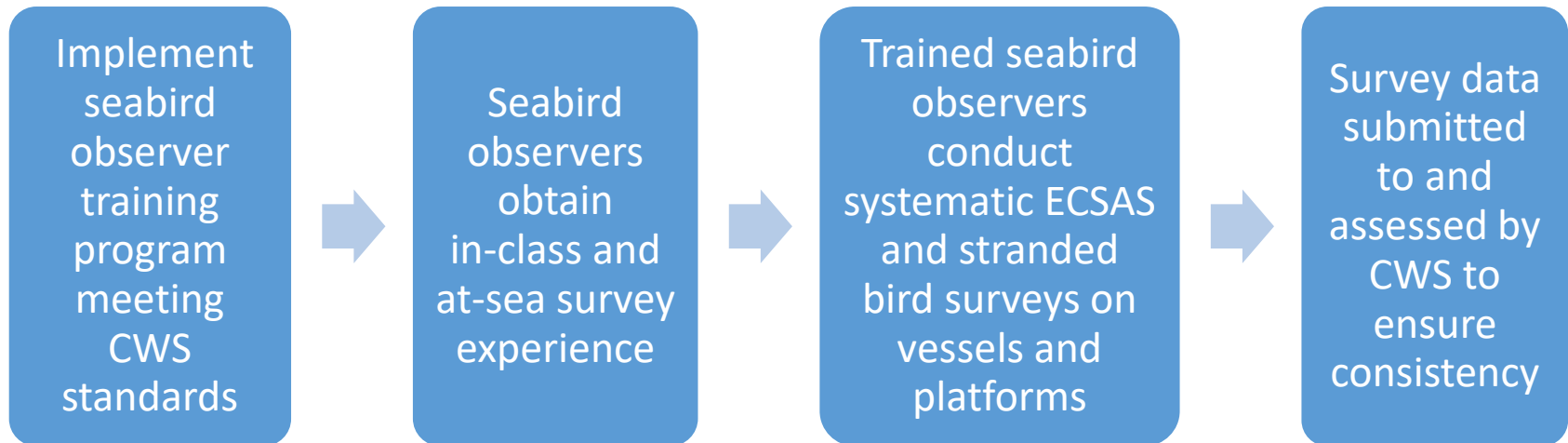
Eastern Canada Seabirds At Sea (ECSAS)

- Longstanding program to increase understanding of bird abundance and distribution offshore.
- ECSAS data informs:
 - Migratory Bird management and conservation
 - Environmental Assessments
 - Emergency Response
- Industry collects ECSAS data during seismic, drilling and spill response
- Working to ensure consistent data collection between industry and CWS



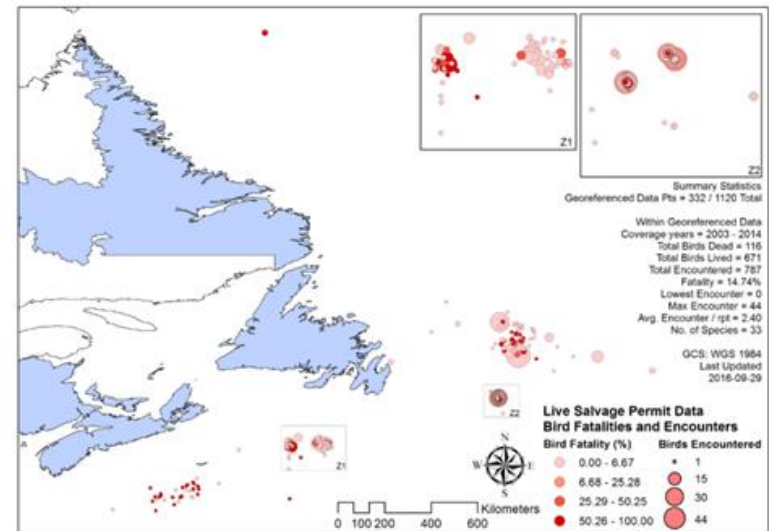
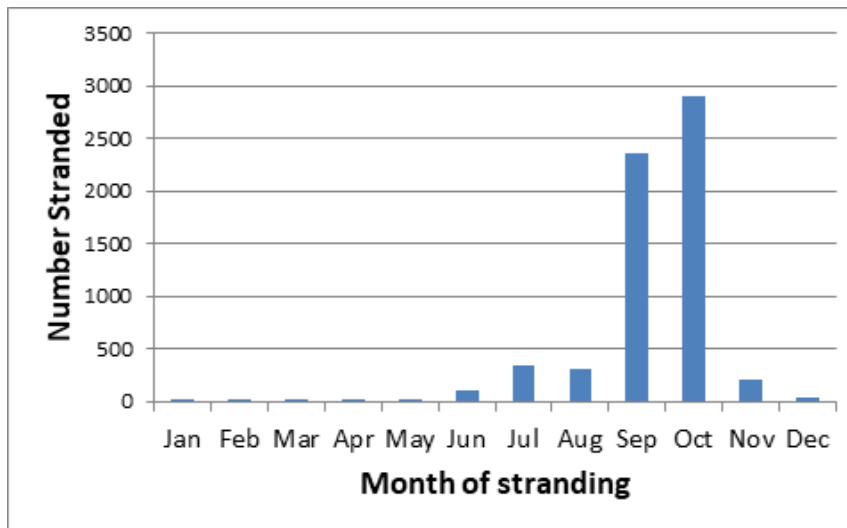
Strengthening industry data through observer training

- Standards for seabird observer training provided by CWS
- Working with C-NLOPB/operators on development of seabird observer training program
- Investing in observer training will improve data consistency



Migratory bird strandings

- 87% of stranded birds reported by industry since 1998 have been Leach's Storm-Petrel



- Nov 2020: Leach's Storm-Petrel assessed as *Threatened* by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada



Implementation of systematic searches for stranded birds

- Daily systematic searches documenting effort are necessary to assess impact on populations
- In consultation with CWS, two operators developed & implemented platform-specific protocols for stranded birds which coincided with the Leach's Storm-Petrel fledging season (Fall 2020):
 - Equinor: drilling offshore
 - Suncor: Terra Nova FPSO anchored in Conception Bay



*safe-haven
boxes*



Conclusions

- Positive progress
 - Development of Wildlife Response Plans
 - Commitment to strengthen observer training
 - Progress on systematic searches for and response to stranded birds
- We look forward to continued collaborative work with operators and the C-NLOPB

